

1. Teaching & Learning

1F.

INCLUSION OF CHILDREN
WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

STANDARDS

The program demonstrates commitment to achieving the principles of full inclusion; natural proportions; and full participation of children with disabilities and their families in natural environments.

The program demonstrates inclusive program and classroom practices that support access, participation, and support of children with special needs and their families.

EVIDENCE

Self-Study and Program Portfolio demonstrate:

Between 10% and 30% of your program's enrolled children have disabilities, as indicated by the number of children with IFSPs, IEPs, and 504 plans (note that children counted toward the 10% threshold differ for public school, child care, and Head Start program (see FAQ), but only children with full IEPs count toward the 30% maximum); a majority of children in inclusive classrooms are children who do not have disabilities; written documentation that program is committed to providing Early Intervention, Special Education, and other special services in children's everyday environments (i.e., natural environments for Early Intervention, inclusive environments for Special Education)

Self-Study and Program Portfolio demonstrate:

The program achieves a minimum score of 85% on the *Illinois Inclusion Guidelines Checklist*, as verified by a state-approved committee of peers and/or on-site assessor.

3A.

PROGRAM
ADMINISTRATION

Program administrators have completed Gateways to Opportunity-approved training on the *Illinois Inclusion Guidelines Checklist* and portfolio development for the Award of Excellence for Inclusion of Children with Special Needs.

Self-Study and Program Portfolio include:

Documentation of ExceleRate-approved training on the *Illinois Inclusion Guidelines Checklist* and portfolio development for the Award of Excellence for Inclusion of Children with Special Needs.

4. Qualifications & Continuing Education

4A.

ADMINISTRATOR
QUALIFICATIONS

STANDARDS

Program administrators demonstrate current knowledge of state and community service systems, policies, and requirements related to children with special needs and their families, and of local, state, and national recommended practices and resources related to inclusive care and education.

EVIDENCE

Self-Study and Program Portfolio include:

Documentation of 3 clock hours of training, completed within the past 3 years, of required, ExceleRate-approved training on *Early Childhood Systems* (or documentation of equivalent knowledge), to include state and community service systems, policies, and requirements related to children with special needs and their families. *(May be met by completion of required Orientation to the Self-Study for the Award of Excellence for Inclusion of children with Special Needs)*

AND

Documentation of 9 clock hours, completed within the past 3 years, of ExceleRate-approved training (or equivalent coursework) on inclusion of young children with special needs and their families. (6 clock hours may be met by completion of required *Orientation to the Self-Study for the Award of Excellence for Inclusion of children with Special Needs*)

4B.

STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

All classroom and special services staff who provide direct services to children with special needs have current knowledge of requirements and recommended practices for children with special needs and their families, and implement assessment, curriculum, instructional, and environmental practices that support education and care of children with special needs and their families in inclusive, natural environments.

Self-Study and Program Portfolio include:

Documentation of 3 clock hours of ExceleRate-approved training on-line and/or face-to-face training on the Use of the *Inclusive Classroom Profile for Self-Assessment and Goal-Setting* by at least one staff member from each classroom, with additional staff members completing the 1-hour webinar on the same topic.

AND

Documentation of a minimum of 6 clock hours, completed within the past 3 years, of ExceleRate-approved training (or equivalent coursework) on inclusion of children with special needs and their families, to include training in two or more of the following areas: assessment of young children with special needs; enhancing learning for children with special needs; collaborating with families in providing education and care to young children with special needs.